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Lot 471: *"Swinburne has sent me some charming messages..." A Newly discovered Letter from Oscar Wilde Wilde (Oscar) A very good Autograph Letter, signed in black ink on his headed notepaper (16 Tite Street, Chelsea) 4pp (single folded sheet), addressed to Mr.*

Est: €15,000 EUR - €20,000 EUR

Mealy's
December 05, 2006
Castlecomer, Ireland

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Item Overview

Description

"Swinburne has sent me some charming messages..." A Newly discovered Letter from Oscar Wilde Wilde (Oscar) A very good Autograph Letter, signed in black ink on his headed notepaper (16 Tite Street, Chelsea) 4pp (single folded sheet), addressed to Mr. Verschoyle of the Fortnightly Review, with a fine bold signature, undated, circa 1889. As a m/ss., w.a.f. * Rev. John Stuart Verschoyle, of the well-known Anglo-Irish family, (family seat at Tasshaggart, Co. Dublin, now City West), was an associate editor of the Fortnightly Review. In 1889 Wilde published an article there on the career of Thomas Wainewright, a painter and art journalist, who got into financial trouble and was jailed for forgery. He writes to thank Verschoyle for his letter and accompanying cheque (for the Wainewright article), and goes on to say that 'Swinburne has sent me some charming messages about it, and Theodore Watts tells me that Rossetti was at one time so fascinated by Wainewright's history that he proposed to write his life.. He was certainly a curious and interesting personality ... If his prose was a little better I should like him more _____ but what a good ancestor for "Telegraphese"! A most interesting letter, dropping a fine assortment of names within a few lines, and an early indication of Wilde's interest in the shady side of life. Wainewright was also accused of insurance fraud and of poisoning, and was jailed for a time at Reading (the same prison where Wilde was sent to serve his sentence for indecency in 1895). Later Wainewright was transported to Tasmania, where he died. In 1889 Wilde had published only poems and some fairy- tales, but he was on the brink of his period of brilliant success, with 'Dorian Gray' (1890), followed by 'Lady Windermere's Fan' (1892) and the other classic plays which made him a household name before his disgrace and imprisonment. * This letter is not recorded in Hart- Davis' 'Complete

Letters of Oscar Wilde,' is not mentioned in Ellmann's biography, and appears to be entirely unrecorded. Good and substantial letters from Wilde are now extremely rare. (1) SEE ILLUSTRATION-PLATE 36.

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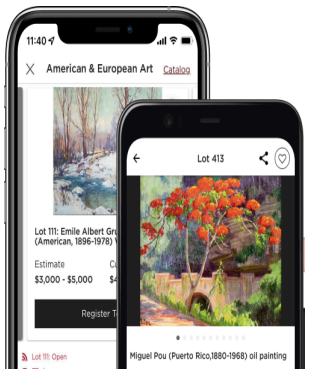

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